

THE MAKING OF THUNDERBOLT: A FORAY INTO TUNDE KELANI'S FILM TECHNIQUE

Abiodun J. Macaulay

Dept. of Performing and Film Arts, Elizade University, P.M.B. 002, Ilara-Mokin, Ondo State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT: *Making a film can be seen as a long process of decision making, not just by the director but by all the specialists who work on his or her team. A great many decisions, however, do affect what we see and hear on the screen. There are the artistic choices made by the film makers. What lights will enhance the atmosphere of a love scene? Given the kind of story being told, would it be better to let the audience know what the central character is thinking or to keep him enigmatic? When a scene opens, what is the most economical, understandable way of letting the audience know the time and place? Which is more dramatic, to show an explosion or just have it heard from off screen? The sum total of all such decisions cumulates in a finished film. In this work, we are going to survey all the aspects of the filmmaking process. Our cases study is Tunde Kelani in his award winning production Thunderbolt. The essay will examine his roles as a film director. How he approaches his art from the pre-production stage to the post production stage. Adopting Stanislavsky method acting that proposes that acting must come from inside. That is, actors should feel what they portray.*

KEYWORDS: Film, Production, Pre-Production, Post-Production, Directing, Decision, Specialists, Screenplay

INTRODUCTION

Film is a young medium, at least compared to most other media. Painting, literature, dance, and theatre have existed for thousands of years as history recorded, but film came into existence only a little more than a century ago. Yet in this fairly short span, the newcomer has established itself as an energetic and powerful art form.

Film art has some unusual features. More than most arts, film depends on complex technology. Without machines, movies would not move, and filmmakers would have no tools. In addition, film art usually requires collaboration among many participants, people who follow well-proven work routines. Films are not only created, according to Bordwell and Thompson (2010:1) "but produced". Just as important, they are firmly tied to their social and economic context. Films are distributed and exhibited for audiences, and money matters.

A film, also called a motion picture, movie or photography, is a series of still images which, when shown on a screen, creates the illusion of moving images. This optical illusion causes the audience to perceive continuous motion between separate objects viewed rapidly in succession. The process of film making is an art. Film is the art of simulating experiences to communicate ideas, stories, perceptions, feelings, beauty or atmosphere by the means of recorded or programmed moving images along with other sensory stimulation.

Films are cultural artifacts created by specific cultures. They reflect those cultures, and, in turn, affect them. Film is considered to be an important art form, a source of popular entertainment, and a powerful medium for educating or indoctrinating citizens. The visual basis of film gives it a universal power of communication. According to Bordwell and Thompson (2010: 2-3), “motion pictures are so much a part of our lives that it is hard to imagine a world without them. We enjoy them in theatres, at home, in offices, in cars and buses, and on airplanes... We carry film with us in our laptops and iPods. We press the button, and our machines conjure up movies for our pleasure.”

For over a hundred years Bordwell and Thompson proceed, people have been trying to understand why this medium has so captivated us. Films communicate information and ideas, and they show us places and ways of life we might not otherwise know...films offer us ways of seeing and feeling that we find deeply gratifying. They take us through experiences. The experiences driven by stories, with characters we come to care about, but a film might also develop an idea or explore visual qualities or sound textures. A film takes us on a journey, offering a pattern experience that engages our minds and emotions.

Film doesn't happen by accident. Films are designed to have effect on viewers. Late in the 19th century, moving pictures emerged as a public amusement. They succeeded because they spoke to the imaginative needs of a broad-based audience. All the traditions that emerged-telling fictional stories, recording actual events, animating objects or pictures, experimenting with pure form-aimed to give viewers experiences they couldn't get from other media. The men and women who made films discovered that they could control aspects of cinema to give their audience richer, more engaging experiences. Learning from one another, expanding and refining the options available, film makers developed skills that became the basis of film as an art form.

Cinema is an art according to the duo of Bordwell and Thompson because its offers film makers' ways to design experiences for viewers and those experiences can be valuable regardless of their pedigree. Films for audiences both small and large belong to that very inclusive art we call cinema. Any art form offers a vast range of creativity possibilities. Our basic assumption is that as an art, film offers experiences that viewers find worthwhile-diverting, provocative, puzzling, or rapturous. Most basically films come from three places. They come from the imagination and hardwork of the filmmakers who create them. They come from an extraordinarily complex set of machines that capture and replay images. And they come from companies or individuals that pay for the filmmakers and the technology.

Making of film requires a long process of decision making by all the specialists who work on the film. The team is headed and coordinated by the director. Early decisions come as the script is written and the various elements are designed. More decisions come daily during the actual filming, especially as unexpected problems or opportunities arise. Decisions continue up to the point where the director okays the last shot to be completed. These decisions could be as important as who plays the lead or as trivial as which buttons look best on a costume.

A great many decisions, however, do affect what the audience see and hear on the screen. There are the artistic choices made by the filmmakers. What lights will enhance the atmosphere of a love scene? Given the kind of story being told, would it be better to let the audience know what the central character is thinking or to keep him enigmatic? Which is more dramatic, to show an explosion or just have it heard from off screen? The sum total of all such decisions culminates in a finished film.

Sometimes the decisions have to do with the business side of the production. What are some ways to save money? Which of the planned special effects being done on a tight budget are more important or necessary? These decisions, too, affect what the audience see and hear in the finished film. Other times the decisions are practical ones that won't affect the look or sound of the final film, as when a source of electricity has to be found to power the light when a movie is shooting on location. Every decision the director makes at every stage of the production will determine whether the film is going to be successful or not. This is why the director must possess both the artistic and managerial skills. This leads to the questions, who is a film director? What are the jobs of the film director? What qualities must a film director possess?

Film directors create an overall vision through which a film eventually becomes realized or noticed. Realizing this vision includes overseeing the artistic and technical elements of film production, as well as directing the shooting timetable and meeting deadlines. This entails organizing the film crew in such a way as to achieve their vision of the film. This requires skills of group leadership, as well as the ability to maintain a singular focus even in the stressful, fast-paced environment of a film set. It is necessary to have artistic eye to frame shots and give precise feedback to cast and crew, thus, excellent communication skills are a must.

The director's vision shapes the look and feel of a film. He or she is the creative force that pulls a film together, responsible for turning the worlds of a script into images on the screen. Actors, cinematographers, writers, and editors orbit around the director like planets around the sun. According to Kaufman, Antill and Tlapoyawa (2008, 5),

The director has final approval on everything, from wardrobe to special effects, and props to catering. The director is ultimately the final author and owner of his or her film. This has its roots in the auteur theory of the French new wave'. Without the director-without a singular, personal vision, passion, a driving need to tell a particular story- the actors are merely window-dressing.

Since the film director depends on the successful cooperation of many different creative individuals with possibly strongly contradicting artistic ideals and visions, he or she also needs to possess conflict resolution skills in order to mediate whenever necessary. Thus, the director ensures that all individuals involved in the film production are working towards an identical vision for the completed film. The set of varying challenges he or she has to tackle has been described as "a multi-dimensional jig saw puzzle with egos and weather thrown in for good measure.

LITERATURE REVIEW: CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Film directing came at a time when the field of stage directing had been established. However, film directing was originated by two men who brought their own personalities into their perception of film making. One of them was Goerge Melies, a Frenchman who told story with his films, using sets, actors in costume and staged action within scenes. This ingenuity and innovation is well explored in one of his early films, *A trip to the Moon*. However, Richard (1971, 95) states that David Wark Griffith was the first imaginative director to develop film into an art form which is serious and efficient, 'with his outstanding style, he improved upon

his predecessor techniques and intensified their dramatic effectiveness. He also introduced the cuts, fades and dissolves as well as extended and condensed time to suit his purpose”

This new eminence given, the director received its impetus in an article in the French magazine *Cashiers du cinema* in 1954. According to Richard (1971,1) Trauffaut, a popular film critic, while making argument in favour of the director as the true author of the finished film in his popular auteur theory of filmmaking writes that films were not group art rather the result of singular authority over story, acting and photography”. Practically everyone already connected with the motion picture harbours either a secret or openly avowed desire to be a director, basically because the job is the most gratifying one in the film making business; and there are evident facts that most directors graduated to the exalted director chair from other jobs within the industry, going by the speech of frank Capra, while opening the annual banquet of the Directors Guild of America as quoted by Richard (1971, 4), “Good evening, I wish to welcome all you directors. I especially wish to welcome you writer-directors, actor-director, writer-producer-directors, cameraman-director and editor-director and of course just plain director-director”.

The film audience was more interested in the actors in the silent period of films, but today, an awareness has brought them to recognize and appreciate the essentiality, ingenuity, creativity and management of the brain behind the film, who is the director. His level of eminence is so much today that the success at the box office no longer depends on the actor, but himself as well.

Without directing, without this respective and precise science, this powerful and subtle art, many plays would not have come down to us. Many plays would not be understood. Many comedies would not enjoy success. Hodge (1971, 1) sees directing as a highly sensitive craft involving intensive play analysis, exceptional skills in communication, and approaches to the making of style...stimulation and arrangement of the doing of others, a very complicated process requiring many exceptional skills of its own”. Cohen (1988, 30) defines it as an art whose product is the most ambiguous, perhaps the most mysterious...the director...is not visible like scenery or costume and unlike actor’s voice or the sound designer score, it cannot be directly heard or sensed. And yet direction underlies everything we see and hear in the theatre”.

All the scholarly definitions above presented various positions on the art of directing, thus confirming our earlier assertion that there is no universal definition for directing. Directing as an art is further complicated by the fact that the art cannot be measured yet it is indispensable. The need for the unity of actors, good technical, good crew, polished smooth cues, compelling pictures, good performance, lighting, movement and combining all elements into a whole, crystallized the concept of directing as we have it today. Good directing according to Brook (1968, 43) is the one with exciting production”. For an artist to understand directing, he must experience the aesthetic of directing which is the integration of all the component of film and blending of all contributing artists to focus those efforts in the actors in performance.

Every artistic presentation is achieved through the creative individuality of the artist. When making a play, the director must follow the script scrupulously but he must not do it blindly, word for word or copy it. A director who has no idea of his own other than those set out in the script, cannot create anything of his own. Such a director cannot copy the literary presentation properly. According to Jong (1987,17), “the director can only create something new,

something of his own, when he consistently maintains high creative spirit, beginning from the interpretation of life and literature to the creation of a portrayal”.

A bold new idea in creation only ripens fully when brought to life. The director can produce nothing new if he sits in his study, mechanically trying to produce a script from the literary work created by a writer who has gone into actual situations and lived amongst the people. If the director does not make a serious study of actual conditions based on literary presentation and just wastes his time in his study, hoping that the writer will present everything stageable and perfectly, he will have many problems in his work later. The director has to begin his creative work by experiencing life and understanding it well. He should experience and store in his mind all meaningful happenings from trifling details to stirring historic events. When he has accumulated an experience of life and seethes with passion to such an extent that he cannot remain still without describing it, creative work will flow smoothly and become a pleasant and worthy task.

Tunde Kelani as a Film Director

Tunde Kelani's passion for photography was dated back to his primary and secondary school days at Abeokuta. He became an apprentice photographer with Okubanjo's studio at Broad Street in Lagos after his secondary education. In 1969, he applied as cine cameraman trainee with the former Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) and was the only candidate taken out of the four that were invited for interview. Before moving to Lagos to join NBC television, he did a lot of newsreel work for WNTV. His quest for professionalism made him to apply to the prestigious London International Film School, where he bagged a diploma in the art and technique of filmmaking. Upon his return to Nigeria after his training in London, Tunde Kelani worked as cameraman to most of the Nigerian 16mm films made at that time. This includes, *Anikura*, *Ireke Onibudo*, *Papa Ajasco*, *Kannakanna*, *Ogun Ajaye*, *Iya ni wura*, *Taxi driver*, *Iwa*, *Fopomoyo* and many more.

In 1992, he established Mainframe film and Television production for the purpose of promoting Nigeria's rich cultural heritage and mora values through the medium of motion picture. The outfit added to his credit the following award winning feature videos: *Ti Oluwa ni Ile Part 1-3* (1994), *Koseegbe* (1996), *Oleku 1&2* (1997), *Saworo Ide* (1999), *Thunderbolt* (2000), and *Agogo Eeewo* (2001). He had also directed some M-Net short feature films in the New Direction project-*Twins of the Rain Forest* and *A Place Called Home*.

According to Richard (1971, 1), to understand fully the subject of film is to delve into the inner workings of the one who (today more than ever before) shoulders the greater responsibility for what reaches the screen. And this most expert is the director”. He is responsible to the producer for the creative implementation of the script. He is involved in the production from the earliest scripting stage right through to completion of the project. He is responsible for the dramatic content of the project.

Today, he may be described as a composite figure taking into consideration his diverse undertakings and commitments in different areas. The responsibility for grooming actors and boosting acting performance for the technical crew and seeing that the production is on time and within budget. Though there is no concise definition of who the film director is, he could be said to be one who is liable for the organization of the technical and creative bits that add up to the finished product the audience watch. He is the creative catalyst in the blending together into a single artistic experience all the individual contributions involved in the

production. Tunde Kelani describes him as ‘‘someone who is charged with the responsibility of total creative control of film making, and who must work with other experts to achieve a particular goal visually’’.

In film making, the director is responsible to the producer who is the head organizer, responsible for the provision of funds, equipment and other artists like cameraman, production manager, designers and script writer. This however is not rigidly enforced and it doesn't apply in some cases where the director picks his own crew. Tunde kelani affirmed this position while answering questions on whether he is responsible to anybody for the production of Thunderbolt, ‘‘well in a sense, I'm responsible to Mainframe Production, which is a limited liability company with its own board and chairman...to bring in money’’. The question of the film director being present from the earlier scripting stage depends largely on his relationship with the producer. Some producers, especially when they have not had any working experience with the director prefer to bring him in when the scripting has been done. In a situation like this, he might have the original idea, he then invites the scriptwriter who he acquaints with his idea. After their story sitting session, which is after discussing the idea, the scriptwriter then produces a storyline subject to the approval of the producer. If found suitable, the producer then ask the scriptwriter to go ahead and write the first draft. When the first draft is completed and found acceptable, the master script is produced. There might be second and third drafts before the final script or master script is produced. It is after the master script has been produced that the director appears on the scene. Richard (1971, 35), suggests that the director's first duty upon being assigned to a feature film is to spend some time with the writer who developed the script in conjunction with the producer. It is here that the director's interpretation first become a force and usually certain portions of the script are re-written or polished according to the director's viewpoint’’.

The Director and the Script

William Goldman as quoted by Lynnes S Gross and Larry W. Ward (1994, 9) observes, ‘‘Ask any director and he will tell he is only as good as his screenplay. There is no picture without a script’’. To corroborate this, Richard (1971, 36) while establishing the significance of a good story to a fantastic picture says, I know of no case where a picture was a hit, unless it had basically good story, even though it had been brilliantly directed’’. The statement credited to Richard shows that the input of the director to the final shaping of the script cannot be overlooked. Answering question on what attracted him to Thunderbolt story, Tunde Kelani says,

I look for a story that has a cultural theme or a cultural base in my language and culture...I come across Adebayo Faleti's Magun, and what struck me was the fact that it had crossed tribes, and in a country where we have so many diversities in terms of ethnicity, I thought we could make a statement. That is, look at two strong Nigeria tribes, a Yoruba boy marries an Ibo girl and inevitably, they have to speak in English at the end of the day. For me I don't think it's an English movie because it happened naturally.

The idea for a movie may be initiated by the writer or a producer may initiate the idea and find a writer willing to turn the idea into a script. Sometimes scriptwriting begins with the writer verbally presenting the basic story idea or concept to a producer. If the producer buys the idea, the writer may be commissioned to develop it into a completed script. Sometimes movie ideas

come from books or other media, in which case the writing is an adaptation of another work. Writers work through many stages before the script is finalized

When the master script is ready and the director is given one, he studies it thoroughly and plans how to go about realizing it pictorially on the screen. He plans his budget and if approved, he goes on to auditioning, casting and rehearsals. However, in planning his budget, the director takes into consideration the role of his crew members such as cameraman, lighting, costume, set designer and in some cases where it is necessary, the special effect and so on. When asked about the factors that necessitate the budget for *Thunderbolt Tunde kelani* responds as thus, ‘‘...I spent a lot of money on research. I spent a lot of money on production design, hiring of special equipment...post production takes a lot of the budget and of course the artists fees, the support services in term of welfare, hotel accommodation takes the considerable part of the budget and the fact that welfare, catering, feeding and transportation takes a major chunk of the budget also’’.

With the approval of the budget by the producer the director’s next line of action is to formulate his concept which according to Kelani, is very crucial in film production because ‘‘without it, there cannot be a story or an idea. It is like a basis from which you work. If for instance, you are lost midway, you fall back on your concept’’.

The Director and his Crew

According to Kaufman, Antill and Tlapoyawa (2008, 69),

Assembling your team is easily one of the most important aspects of the entire filmmaking process. You want your production staff and crew to work like a well-oiled-machine, a single creative organism with only one goal in mind: to get your movie made the way that you want to make it. The ideal production team will quickly bond as a family, pulling together during even the most trying times to make the impossible happen.

After forming his concept, the director brings in the assistants, the production designers who are in charge of the look of the film. The production designers oversee all the visual elements-scenery, props, costumes, makeup, locations, effects, to make sure they are all appropriate, consistent, and in line with the directors desires. Others are the production manager, the sound man, the props man and probably assistant director. With them he discusses his concept and together they work out how they will work on the production. Having met the production crew, the director sets about casting where casting is not handled by the casting department. Auditions are held and they are either close or open or invitational audition. Kaufman, Antill and Tlapoyawa (2008, 89-94) advise as thus,

Casting your film is actually a lot like fishing. You throw out a line and hope that you don’t reel in a bunch of mullets, sharks, or rusty toilet. Mulletts are the folks who aren’t really all that bad as far as people go, but their idea of ‘‘acting’’ seems to be just becoming a more exaggerated and pathetic version of themselves. You may end up using a few mullets to fill small roles or as nonspeaking actor persons...sharks are far worse than mullets. Because they have fins and swims around, you may mistake them for fish. But they are, in fact, pure evil, and will destroy your movie with their sharp and slimy rows of teeth, also known as their egos and their negativity. Beware of the shark diva.

As for toilet seats, I think the name is self-explanatory. These people are simply put, shit, and you don't want them in your film. Anytime you look at someone's resume or audition tape, ask yourself, "Is this person a fish". Stick to casting fish and you are already on the road to making a better movie.

In the production of *Thunderbolt*, the director used pre-casting and open tryout methods. In this defense of this methods, Kelani says,

Once you are reading a story (script), some names must necessarily come to your mind. In casting Ngozi in *Thunderbolt*, the conceiver was Uche Obi Ootule. She is one of the talented actresses we have around and she has a pleasant personality and you know Faleti will play one of the herbalists. You know that Larinde Akinleye will play the vee-pee etc. But what we then did was after those pre-casting, we then threw the rest open to the public and we held two or three public auditions...

Kaufman, Antill and Tlapoyawa submit that director should mix and match their actors with other people to see how they work together as a team. Obviously it is pretty hard to tell whether someone is a good actor in only a minute's time. "What you are looking for is charisma, energy, and on-screen presence. Be mindful as to what characters you think will suit each actor. Somebody who makes you laugh your ass off in their audition might suck donkey balls when it comes time to deliver a dramatic performance"

Rehearsing the Play

As rehearsals begin, the director should be careful to work within the limits of his budget. Although he could get away with over budget, when the production is a hit. So the director must have a well thought through schedule in order to work at full capacity and within time. Normally rehearsals begin in earnest only after a read through session. This session is the first time the entire cast meet and it provides a forum for the digestion of the play by the cast under the tutelage of the director. It is from this point that the director takes complete control or official charge over the production. This is the beginning of the director- actor relationship that can either mar or make the production.

The writers role during shooting is far more limited and often the source of great frustration. The writer may be called on to rewrite dialogue or to make small changes in some area of the script but often has little say about how the screenplay is modified or rewritten during production by the director, producer, actors or anyone else with the power to make changes. This frustration has sent some writers into directing as the surest way to bring a script to the screen in the way they originally visualized it on paper. The director uses the read through sessions to impart on his cast the philosophy of the play, their various characters, their motives and generally the character relationship. As regards *Thunderbolt*, Kelani says, " We actually read several times at the ITPAN office in Lagos, and when we got to location at Ibadan, we tried to do the same, just to give some latitudes to the range of the cast".

After the reading sessions, when the actors should be familiar with the script, rehearsal proper begins. Rehearsals should take place in rehearsal room, built or hired for the purpose of the production. From here the director moves his cast into location where the last stages of rehearsals are conducted. However, there are situations when the cast is moved directly to location for brief rehearsals and shooting. Most rehearsals of film production are mainly for

actors to perfect their lines since a scene in a busy market for instance, cannot be rehearsed in the market. However, most directors in Nigeria hardly bother about rehearsal as you find situations whereby actors would still be learning lines with actual shooting going on. This disturbs fluidity.

Blocking begins when the cast has come to grip with the script. In a film production, blocking is two way affair for the director. He blocks the actors as well as the camera. The importance of the camera in a film production cannot be overstated as it is the device through which film is possible. The camera is such a powerful instrument in film production that without a director being able to manipulate it, he would not communicate effectively to the audience. Writing on the camera and the audience, Joseph Little (1976, 135) states that, ‘‘the camera not only sees for the audience, it selects what to be seen and in a way pays attention for the audience’’.

With the camera, the director can create practically any picture. He could tell a story with it without even using dialogue. The film audience is aware of this that is why they would rather see planes flying and cars bumping into each other instead of having them described in the dialogue. This is also why dialogue in film are shot and precise. However, blocking in many films is not complete until the actors are on location. Scenes like car crashes, people chasing each other in streets and so on are hardly blocked until it is shooting time.

When the director moves his cast on location, a whole new phase of rehearsals begin. The cast rehearse on the set and the director checks how things work out, especially on camera. It is not ideal for a director to get on location and shoot right away. Before the shooting proper begin, the director conducts a camera rehearsal and usually a scene is shot after the camera rehearsal. Rehearsal periods are often short in film productions. They can be anytime from one day to four weeks but because of the short dialogue, the camera and the fact that the faults of the actors can be corrected through editing, most film rehearsals last for less than a fortnight. This view is corroborated by Tunde Kelani, ‘‘...If time and budget permit, I think four weeks of rehearsal is ideal, but then sometimes, two weeks should do it’’. By the time shooting starts, the director would have drawn up a shooting schedule which shows how the film will be shot. When shooting begins, there can be as many takes as possible until the director is satisfied with the scene. However, film directors should be conscious of Richard’s (1971, 47) position that a perfect rehearsal is a wasted take. Insufficient rehearsal causes imperfect takes. Unused takes causes a waste of valuable time and money’’. This is a reality but it is unavoidable, that is why it is called film and that is why it is different from stage performance. You start and stop but stage, once the lights are on, the actors are on their own.

The Director and his Actors

Actors are powerful force in film making. They are, of course, central to any movie. Directors work very closely with them to obtain the best performance possible. Through the actors, the director communicate with the audience. A film director must be able to groom his crew and cast into a communicative team. Some directors insists on the actors giving them only what they want while others are ready to compromise. Kaufman, Antill and Tlapoyawa (2008, 12) frown at this, ‘‘ With any luck your actors will have developed a keen awareness of who their characters are, and will have begun to add parts of their own personalities into their portrayal...be open to any suggestions your actors may have regarding their roles.’’ In regards to this, Tunde Kelani says,

What I enjoyed is the collaboration between other people. I sort of like to look for freshness and spontaneity. If they rehearse and found something very useful, I could remind an actor and say ‘‘ see what you did that time, can you just do that’’ rather than that I would give them some freedom to express themselves quite naturally and you see our casting helps that because we cast close to character (s)...there are some for strategic reasons in the story that I know they has to be played in a particular way, that, I might put my feet down rather than that, I sort of give my actors freedom of expression.

For a film director to achieve the utmost, he has to manipulate the psychology of his actors to bring out the best in them. He should be aware of the fact that the film medium is a different medium which demands its own acting. For instance when acting for film, the actors should do away with exaggeration of expressions and speech because of devices like the close up and microphones respectively. The camera can pick up every detail on an actor’s face and so any attempt to employ exaggeration would appear fake. The use of microphone aids the actor speaking. It becomes as though it is a real life situation where the actor speaks normally and raises his voice only when necessary. Basically, there are two major styles of acting for the screen which the director should familiarize himself with. They are method and the technical. To the technical actor, his main concern is to portray the character the way the author created it, and this technique probably reached its peak during the days of the travelling theatre whereby an actor played variety of roles each week, changing back and forth from character to character and portraying each one with conviction and skill.

The method actor on the other hand, approaches his role from another view point. He doesn’t just want to act the part, he wants to be the part. He relies on improvisation and the inspiration of the moment. He must be in the mood before he can do a scene. He cannot turn it on and off the way the technical actor does. The great Stanislavsky, the director of the Mosco Art Theatre, developed the method style of acting and directing over seventy years ago, but it did not become popular in America until sometimes in the 1930s. When a cast is well nurtured, the end result is applaudable. Therefore, the cast must trust the director’s taste, intelligence, experience and judgment going by the word of Heston as quoted by Richard (1971, 149) that ‘‘in film, the actor depends on the director completely that there must almost be a father relationship because in film, an actor cannot always assess his performance to know whether it is working or not’’

The director and the cameraman

This is the one who actually operates the camera. He is the head one who deals with capturing the visual part of the movie. He decides in conjunction with the director how shots should be lit and how they should be captured- long shot, high angle shot, close up shot, medium shot, and so forth. Kaufman, Antill and Tlapoyawa (2008, 75), explain the importance of the cameraman as thus:

If you think that operating a camera is as easy pointing it at your actors and lighting, you have missed it. You will work more closely with the DP while shooting your movie than with any other person on the set, so if you don’t share a common vision with this person you will be setting yourself up for one hell of a horrendous experience, as each of you will attempt to impose your will on the other until someone either breaks or go insane. He must know your working

style so well. By that you will be able to get a hell of a lot more work done than you would if you are working with a new DP each time

Without the camera, there can be no film in the first place. Beyond this is the fact that it acts as the eye of the audience. It shows them what to see and in some cases how to see it.

The working relationship between the director and his cameraman is that of fundamental importance. It is essential for the cameraman to be in good rapport with the director and to make sure he fully understands what the director wants. An experienced director hardly requires the assistance of the cameraman other than for him to record on film with the best technical quality, the scenes as has been arranged by the director. On the contrary, the inexperienced director might depend on the cameraman not merely for recording, but planning the scenes, managing the actors and even an approach to the sequences as a whole.

The role of the cameraman varies according to the personality and experience of the director with whom he is working with. Some directors can draw a cameraman out of his shell and make him think and create much more than usual. This may be because they are operating on the same wavelength or because of the personality of the director. From the cameraman's point of view, a good director is someone who triggers a response rather than has a particular method of doing things, though his method will be sound. However, Richard (1971, 106) suggests that "if a director and his cameraman have full confidence in one another, neither interferes with the work of the other. With this mutual confidence, a director feels more free to do the unusual adventures or even outlandish things, because he knows that he is going to get the image".

The cameraman is not just there to shoot pictures, he should go through the stages of lighting and knowing what exposure to use. This is one of the Kelani strength zones unlike his counterpart cameramen in Nigeria. Tunde Kelani creates cinematic lighting to tell his story, creates mood to explain situations. This is very conspicuous in the lighting of Thunderbolt. As observed Kuafman and his team it is advisable for the director to pick his cameraman, usually one he had working relations with. For instance, Tade Ogidan works with Jonathan Gbemutor as cameraman, Teco Benson works with Solomon Nwoko, Andy Amenech Works with Mohammed Abdullahi, Kunle Afolayan works with Yinka Edward. Therefore, for a film production to achieve optimum effect, there has to exist a rapport between these two.

In Thunderbolt, Tunde Kelani was on the camera. According to him, that is his strength zone and that is what gave him the edge over other film directors and camera men in Nigeria. His training as cinematographer reflected in Thunderbolt in the areas of lighting, placement of camera, positioning of actors and camera movement. He understand the camera language and he used it effectively to convey the writer's idea and the director's vision.

Working with the Editor

The director's work is far from finished when he has photographed the last take of the picture. For now starts the long and arduous editorial process that includes the selection of the best takes and angles, the tightening of the picture to improve the pace and tempo, the addition of sound effects, musical scores, special effects, titles and the final dubbing that transfer as many as ten sound tracks to one. In the words of Ekwuazi (1996, 38) "...the last word is said not by the cameraman but by the editor. He deals with the 'raw' still illogical pieces of material and pasting together sequence after sequence, arranges it into a comprehensive story". As the director must know his camera, the director must also know the secret of editing, for in the

cutting room lies an ever-green danger. Good actors can be made to look less than adequate, and a director's painstaking efforts towards style can be obscured, while pace and tempo can completely disappeared. It is of these reasons the conscientious director will supervise the editing and make sure that his ideas are faithfully transformed into the final cut of the picture. According to Nicholas (2008, p.), "cutting should be invisible, unless there is a good reason to draw attention to it. Edit should feel natural to the audience and virtually unnoticed". Thunderbolt, the scene arrangement is good, the cutting and merging of scenes is smooth and the running time is tight. Other things that are noticeable in the film is the sound and music. A myriad of sound effects are used to enrich the film such as footsteps, rustling etc.

A film without music will fall flat. That is because music is one of the most important components of cinema. It establishes mood, intensifies drama, foreshadows, and can act as glue, connecting scenes and shots that would otherwise seem to have no relation. All these, Tunde Kelani made sure are perfectly and accurately inserted in the film.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the storyline, acting, and other technicality displayed by Tunde kelani and his crew and cast make the overall look of Thunderbolt to be pleasing and commendable. Some of the technicalities exhibited in Thunderbolt placed Tunde Kelani above his peers in Nigeria Film industry. Poor lighting, visual composition has been the bane of film production in Nigeria especially the home videos but in Thunderbolt, a generation statement was made in terms of standard, pace and new horizon.

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